AMENDMENT AND PRESENTATION OF CLAIMS

Please replace all prior claims in the present application with the following claims, in which claims 1, 3, 6-9, 11, and 13-17 are currently amended.

1. (Currently Amended) A method for persistently storing an object belonging to a class, comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

creating a persistent agent based on a <u>name identifying the</u> class, said persistent agent providing an interface <u>including a routine</u> for persistently storing the object in a persistent object store; and

storing the object in the persistent object store ~~based on~~ <u>by invoking the routine via the interface provided by</u> the persistent agent.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of modifying the object in the persistent object store based on the persistent agent.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the step of creating the persistent agent based on the class includes the step of instantiating the persistent agent based on a fully qualified name for ~~a Java~~ <u>the</u> class.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein:

the persistent object store includes a relational database;

and the step of storing the object in the persistent object store includes the step of storing the object in at least one database table corresponding to the class.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 4, wherein the step of creating the persistent agent based on the class includes the steps of:

determining if the at least one database table corresponding to the class has been created; and

if the at least one database table is determined not to have been created, then creating the at least one database table.

6. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 5, wherein step of storing the object in at least one database table includes the steps of:

storing values of at least some of the fields in corresponding columns of the database ~~table;~~

table.

7. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 6, further comprising the step of designating at least some of the columns as primary key columns based <u>on</u> a list of corresponding field names of the object.

8. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 6, further comprising the step of building an index on at least some of the columns based <u>on</u> a list of corresponding field names of the object.

9. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the object contains ~~another~~ <u>an other</u> object belonging to ~~another~~ <u>an other</u> class, said method further comprising the steps of:

creating ~~another~~ <u>an other</u> persistent agent based on the other class; and

storing the other object in the persistent object store based on the other persistent agent.

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10. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of establishing a session with the persistent object store;

wherein the step of creating the persistent agent includes the step of creating the persistent agent based on the session.

11. (Currently Amended) A method of retrieving a set of objects from a persistent object store, comprising the steps of:

creating a persistent agent based on a <u>name identifying a</u> class, said persistent agent providing an interface <u>including a routine</u> for retrieving a set of objects from the persistent object store; and

retrieving the set of objects in the persistent object store ~~based on~~ <u>by invoking the routine via the interface provided by</u> the persistent agent.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 11, wherein the step of retrieving the set of objects includes the step of retrieving the set of objects in the persistent object store based further on a predicate.

13. (Currently Amended) A method for persistently storing an object belonging to a class, comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

creating an agent <u>based on a name identifying the class</u>, said ~~persistent~~ agent providing an interface <u>including a routine</u> for persistently storing the object in a persistent object store; and

storing the object in the persistent object store ~~using~~ <u>by invoking the routine via the interface provided by</u> the agent.

14.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium bearing instructions for implementing an application programming interface (API) of a persistent agent for persistent storing an object belong to a class, said instructions arranged to implement routines for performing the steps of:

instantiating the persistent agent based on <u>a name identifying</u> the class;

storing the object in a persistent object store; and

retrieving a set of objects from the persistent object store based on a predicate.

15. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium bearing instructions for persistently storing an object belonging to a class, said instructions being arranged to cause one or more processors upon execution thereof to perform the steps of:

creating a persistent agent based on a <u>name identifying the</u> class, said persistent agent

providing an interface for persistently storing the object in a persistent object store; and

storing the object in the persistent object store based on the persistent agent.

16. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium bearing instructions for retrieving a set of objects from a persistent object store, said instructions being arranged to cause one or more processors upon execution thereof to perform the steps of:

creating a persistent agent based on a <u>name identifying the</u> class, said persistent agent

providing an interface for retrieving a set of objects from the persistent object store; and

retrieving the set of objects in the persistent object store based on the persistent agent.

17. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium bearing instructions for persistently storing an object belonging to a class, comprising the computer-implemented steps of:

creating a persistent agent based on a <u>name identifying the</u> class, said persistent agent providing an interface for persistently storing the object in a persistent object store; and

storing the object in the persistent object store based on the persistent agent.